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DECEMBER 19.

Mr. VAUX, Vice-President, in the chair.

Thirty-five members present.

Mineralogical Notes.—Mr. JOSEPH WILLCOX said that the two fine crystals of scapolite, which were presented this evening by Mr. Vaux, were found at a new locality for this mineral, in St. Lawrence County, N. Y., and that a specimen from the same locality had recently been received in this city which weighs about 25 pounds, and is probably the largest scapolite crystal ever found.

He also referred to a specimen of quartz on the table from the well-known locality of green quartz at Blue Hill, in Delaware County, Pa. This specimen had been exposed to the weather for a few weeks, and had lost nearly all its green color. This green quartz is found in several veins of chlorite, much decomposed, and each of different intensity in color. The quartz occurring in each vein corresponds in color to the matrix.

Impurities in Drinking Water.—Mr. WILLCOX also stated that, during the last eight years, whenever the Schuylkill River has been covered with ice, he observed that the water supplied by the city possessed a disagreeable odor and taste, like chlorine. Large quantities of chloride of lime are daily used at Manayunk and at the Wissahickon for bleaching purposes, and the chlorine gas is liberated from it by the application of alum and sulphuric acid. A large portion of the chlorine gas subsequently escapes from the water before it reaches Fairmount; but when the river is covered with ice, this process of purification is retarded, and the offensive element is practically conveyed, in a covered trough, from the mills to the pumps that supply our city with water. He was not competent to state if chlorine in this condition is prejudicial to health. Being a powerful disinfectant it may be a providential interposition for the prevention of disease that might be caused by the foul material that is carried in such profusion through the sewers into the Schuylkill River, and which, on account of the ice, would otherwise be transported into our water-pipes in its original impurity.

On Excrescences and Excentric Wood Growths in the Trunks of Trees.—Mr. THOMAS MEEHAN said that on many trees were peculiar excrescences, which, up to a few years ago, had been referred primarily to insect origin. Cutting these through lengthwise there was no appearance of this agency. There were layers of wood of annual growth, just as in the normal parts of the tree.